WE RECYCLE GLASS

in SW Pennsylvania

DID YOU KNOW?

A recycled glass bottle can go from bin to store shelf in 30 days.

Don't Trash Glass!

Every day,

thousands of tons of valuable, recyclable glass go into a landfill due to inefficiencies in our recycling system and misinformed policies. But you can turn this trend around by making sure your glass makes it to a recycling bin.

Top reasons to use and recycle glass

GLASS TOP 5

Always Recycle

1. Glass manufacturing, processing, and recycling is a robust American industry, and **in Pennsylvania, the whole process never has to cross state lines.** Recycling glass employs eight people for every one person employed at a landfill.
2. **Glass is 100% forever recyclable when part of a circular economy.** The same bottle can be made again in just 30 days! There is no downcycling as with plastic recycling.
3. **Recycling glass reduces raw material extraction and saves energy.** More than a ton of natural resources is saved for each ton of glass recycled, and energy is cut by 30%.
4. Throwing away a bottle means it will sit in a landfill and take up space! What a waste! **Don't drag your trash down with glass!** It's also costing us more money to landfill. A recent PA DEP report estimates that the glass disposed in 2021 was worth more than $1.4 million.
5. Glass is proven to be a **safe material for storing food whether it's the first or tenth time the material is being recycled.** Recycled glass or newly made glass is stable, nontoxic, and no additives leach into your food.

PITTSBURGH: GLASS CAPITAL

Before we were a steel city, we were a glass city.

Western PA remains one of the glass manufacturing capitals of the US, making new jars and bottles only several hours from Pittsburgh.

FIRST GLASS WORKS

Pittsburgh's first glass works opened in 1797 along the Monongahela River at the Point of Pittsburgh near where the Duquesne Incline still operates. By 1850, nearly 80% of Pennsylvania's 50 glass factories were located in Pittsburgh, most along the Mon River's south shore near Mt. Washington – known as "Coal Hill" – since proximity to an energy source was a necessity.

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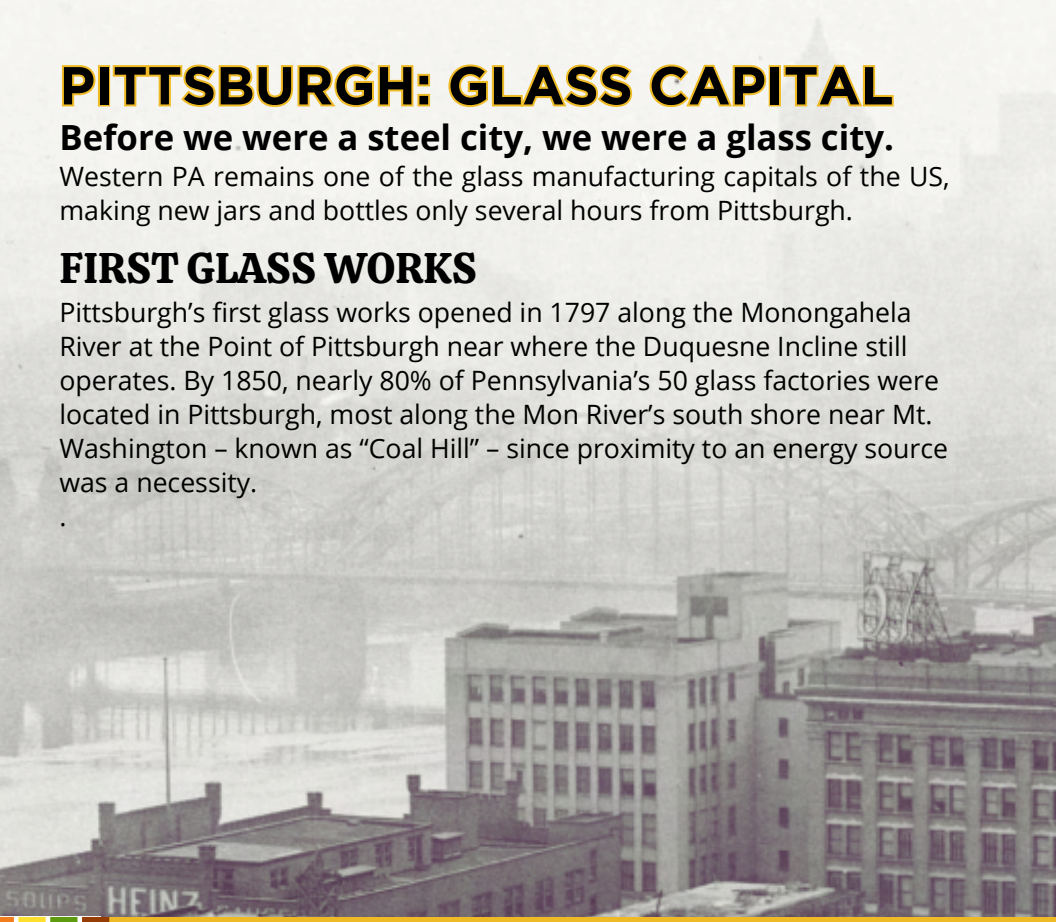


A THROWAWAY CULTURE began in the 1950s with the concept of one-use going mainstream. In the 1960s, lightweight aluminum cans began to replace glass. Companies no longer wanted the cost and hassle of washing and refilling bottles, and glass is heavy to ship, so glass became trash as well. This all led to a crisis of litter and pollution in the late 1960s.

1970s Recycling & Ecology Movement

People wanted more for their communities and did not like seeing glass bottles (as well as cans and paper) tossed into trash cans. Their efforts established the roots of recycling as we know it today—with community involvement, local recycling centers, partnerships with municipalities, curbside recycling opportunities, and a circular economy creating jobs for haulers and manufacturers.

SEE BEFORE YOU BUY

In the late 1800s H. J. Heinz, famous today for ketchup, built a factory on the north shore of the Allegheny River upstream from downtown Pittsburgh to bottle his recipes for horseradish, pickles, and other condiments. Heinz products became synonymous with high sanitation and cleanliness, and the glass bottles used (which were first hand blown at the company's glass works in Sharpsburg) became the popular way to contain food that you could also **see before you buy**.

See What You Buy

BUY IN GLASS

DON'T LET ME BECOME LITTER OR SOLID WASTE

RECYCLE ME

A New Bottle in 30 Days

Let's follow the life of a Red Ribbon soda bottle to illustrate how glass recycling can work. Glass bottles are made of a 100% recyclable material, and a bottle can become a new bottle in 30 days.

CHOOSE GLASS

You buy a Red Ribbon soda. After all, soda in a glass bottle is timeless and nostalgic, no matter your age. The soda is smoother and tastier in a cold glass bottle, but did you know it's also completely nontoxic and environmentally friendly? There are no liners or hidden plastics in your soda, just the timeless experience of a cold drink the old-fashioned way. **Red Ribbon is one of many beloved PA brands that uses bottles made here in PA!**

FINISHED? YOU DECIDE TO RECYCLE

You figure, recycling glass takes a little effort but has big payoffs. Instead of filling our landfills with valuable glass, you can set it aside knowing that it's 100%, infinitely recyclable. The same bottle can be recycled endlessly without ever being "downcycled," and it saves money, carbon emissions, and jobs for glass manufacturers in PA.

Red Ribbon soda has been Pittsburgh's Pop since 1904 when Cherry Supreme Soda debuted from Natrona Bottling Works where it is still made in glass bottles!

Find Out How and Where to Recycle Glass

IN A GLASS DROP-OFF BIN

(*locate one:* prc.org/glass or 1-800-346-4242)
Find out if there is a source-separated glass drop-off bin conveniently located near your home, work, or grocery store. Glass that is collected separately from other materials (such as paper and cardboard) is of the highest quality and will be put straight back into bottle and jar manufacturing.

IN YOUR CURBSIDE RECYCLING BIN:

Do you have curbside recycling at your home? If so, your hauler may or may not accept glass. Check with your township or hauler to find the list of acceptable items for your bin. Whether it's accepted or not, you are always welcome to use a glass-only drop-off bin to ensure a high-quality recycled product.

Single-Stream Commingled vs Source-Separated Recycling

First rule is recycle which way is easiest for you, but single-stream recycling only recovers 30-70% of glass in commingled bins because of contamination and separating equipment challenges. A glass-only collection bin can recover 95-98% of the glass!

SINGLE STREAM

SOURCE SEPARATED

Plan to take home your cardboard boxes or bags. Most source-separated bins (unless at a recycling center) can only take glass bottles, jars, and jugs! Lids and labels are fine to leave on!

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

After you put your glass bottle or jar in the recycling bin, where does it go?

The process involves one or two steps before the recycled glass makes it back to a glass-making factory to become a new bottle.

Recycled in curbside

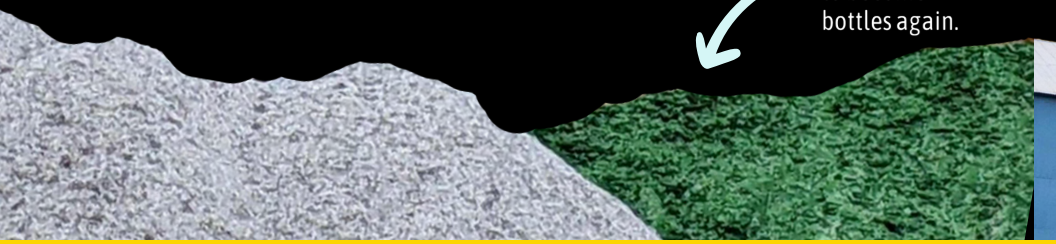
It does take a lot of fuel and energy to move around glass for recycling. Because all the infrastructure is right here in Southwestern PA, within a 2-hour radius of Pittsburgh, it is more cost effective to recycle than to landfill (and use new resources).

Recycled in a glass-only bin

GLASS PROCESSOR

If you recycled your glass in an "all-glass" bin, skip the MRF and go straight to a glass processor that cleans and sorts the glass. High-tech machinery removes as much non-glass debris through magnets and vacuums, and optics separate green, brown, and clear glass and crush it into a smooth pebble-like product called “cullet.” Cullet is sold to a **Glass Manufacturer** to begin the cycle again.

Big piles of recycled glass "cullet" waiting to become bottles again.



Believe it or not, there's glass in there. But this is what some MRF sorted glass looks like when it arrives at the glass processor.

MATERIALS RECOVERY FACILITY

If you recycled your glass curbside in a single-stream commingled bin, its next step is being picked up and hauled to a materials recovery facility or MRF ("Merf"). Once there, the glass is separated from paper, plastic, aluminum, and cardboard. Small items like loose lids, pieces of paper, and plastics end up in the glass stream collection. It needs another good sort at the **Glass Processor**.

GLASS MANUFACTURER

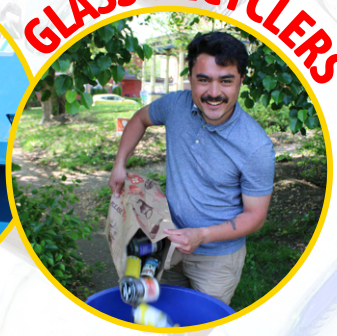
The cullet is remelted and molded back into a glass jar or bottle. Pennsylvania and neighboring states are home to several glass manufacturers. This smooth pebble-like glass from your used bottle will be placed in a furnace with sand, soda ash, and lime and melted into a super-hot liquid. The hot liquid drops into a mold before being flipped, spun, and gradually brought back to room temperature. It's inspected, packed and returned to be filled again with *Red Ribbon* soda or other favorite foods or beverages!

Faces of Glass

You

GLASS RECYCLERS

"I choose glass over plastic whenever possible. Now that there's a new permanent glass recycling dumpster in Oakmont, it is easier than ever to do my part."
Becky M., Oakmont, PA



"I gravitate towards products that are in glass because it is a much more sustainable material.

I'm glad to support a more circular economy."
Eric M. Pittsburgh, PA

RECYCLING

"I sought funding sources from the state to provide glass-specific infrastructure for myself and my neighbors to recycle food-grade glass!"
Omoye Aikhuele, Recycling Specialist, City of Pittsburgh

LOCAL GOVERNMENT LEADERS

"In recent years, recycling changed in the United States, but we were all faced with the same problem. There was an opportunity for Dormont to partner and help other communities. By building the Glass Recycling Collaborative with a PA DEP grant, many communities can keep recycling glass."
Ben Estell, Manager, Borough of Dormont

"The residents of our community had been asking for a permanent glass recycling dumpster, and when we finally got one, they filled up the first dumpster in a couple of weeks, which equaled six tons of glass."
Phyllis J. Anderson, Assistant Manager, Borough of Oakmont

" We make sure it gets from Point A to Point B. Last year, we recycled the equivalent of seven million bottles."
Boyd Jones, Business Support Manager, Michael Brothers Hauling & Recycling

KEEPING IT LOCAL

Together in SWPA we create a **circular economy** of glass recycling through private, public, governmental, nonprofit partners, and everyday people.

GLASS PROCESSOR

"Always choose glass. Not just for the taste but because it's better for the environment."
Chris Koontz, Director of Operations, CAP Glass, Mt Pleasant, PA

SPECIALISTS

"I work with local government and haulers to bring back glass recycling!"
Simon Joseph, Glass Program Coordinator, PRC

BOTTLE MANUFACTURER

"The best thing that could happen for glass [manufacturing], and its future, would be that everybody recycled. If the environment and manufacturing work together, we can have the jobs and we can enjoy the beauty of Western Pennsylvania."
Barry Charles, Improvements Manager, O-I Glass , Brockway/Crenshaw Plants

GLASS COLLECTORS

"I helped haul over 600 tons of source-separated glass in 2022."
Cruz Wagner, Recycling Collector, City of Pittsburgh

BUSINESS OWNER

" Owens-Illinois, they make a quality bottle. I would never move away from glass. It screams higher quality and it keeps the flavor. I'm a fan of glass."
Vito Gerasole, Owner, Natrona Bottling Works

CIRCULAR ECONOMY

YOUR DECISION TO RECYCLE RIGHT

- Saves energy and natural resources
- Supports PA businesses
- Protects manufacturing jobs and feeds a local circular economy

ONE MONTH LATER

From the time you dropped your empty bottle into the recycling bin, you could see that bottle back on your store shelf in as little as *THIRTY DAYS*.

There's a good chance your soda bottle never left the state of Pennsylvania. From manufacturing to recycling, we have everything right here!

Glass Glossary

Circular Economy
A highly sustainable economic system. Instead of going back for raw resources, production relies on reuse or regeneration of material and is much more environmentally friendly.

Cullet
Crushed recycled glass. It is either amber (brown), green, or flint (clear).

Downcycling
The recycling process creates a product of a lower quality. For example plastic bags can be recycled to create picnic tables but cannot become a bag again.

Materials Recovery Facility (MRF)
After commingled or single-stream recycling is collected in a curbside recycling pickup, it goes to a MRF ("Merf") to be re-sorted into source-separated streams that have marketable value.

Single-Stream Recycling
Also called commingled recycling. A system in which all recyclables, including glass, newspaper, cardboard, plastic, aluminum and metal cans, junk mail, etc., are placed in a single bin. Single-stream recycling must be sorted before recyclables can be sold.

Source-Separated Recycling
A system of separating materials by type at the point of discard so they can be recycled without sorting. This is a preferred method for glass because in single-stream collection, glass gets very "dirty" and/or contaminates other materials such as cardboard.

Wishcycling
Throwing whatever you think is recyclable into a bin without first checking the list of what can be recycled in that bin. Wishcyclers contaminate recycling, causing more to go to landfill.

At source-separated glass bins, take your bags and boxes home!

WHAT GOES IN THE BIN

Bottles, Jars and Jugs

- **Rinse clean, leave on labels**
- **Lids?** *Standard industry practice currently is to leave lids on, but always check with your local hauler or city/town.*

PUT LOOSE IN BIN. NO PLASTIC BAGS.

WHAT DOES NOT GO IN THE BIN

- **NO drinking glasses, glass bakeware, light bulbs, mirrors, windows or antique "cut glass"**
- **NO "milk glass"** The opaque white glass that looks like ceramic used in many antique vases and bowls
- **NO coffee mugs, ceramics, or porcelain,** which can really damage glass equipment

PRC staff tour the O-I Glass bottle plant in Crenshaw, PA

Pennsylvania Resources Council is a 501(c)(3) environmental nonprofit established in 1939. We steward resources to prevent waste and conserve the environment, and we champion community-based glass recycling to help create **a Pennsylvania where nothing is wasted.**

Love being part of the PA glass circular economy?

Want to see more glass bins in the Keystone State? Consider donating online to PRC today. Your contribution helps pay for glass hauling, equipment, and educational materials so we can close the loop on glass recycling.

prc.org/donate

FIND A GLASS RECYCLING BIN NEAR YOU

Bottles, Jars & Jugs

Since 2019, PRC has helped to set up a dozen permanent drop-off sites in western PA and held nearly 100 glass recycling pilot events.

Visit our website or call us to start championing glass recycling today.

First day ribbon cutting event at Oakmont, PA's permanent glass recycling station

Glass recycling methods include:

PRC's Traveling Glass Bin is a weeklong bin rental running from Saturday to Thursday. It is a great option for communities to gauge interest in glass collection or for smaller communities with less demand for recycling.

The **Glass Recycling Collaborative**, a program funded by a PA Department of Environmental Protection 902 Recycling Grant, is held by Borough of Dormont. This program enables PRC to partner with municipalities to facilitate permanent glass recycling sites across Allegheny County. The Glass Recycling Collaborative currently services nine municipalities!

Learn More: **prc.org/glass**

STAY GLASSY
in SW Pennsylvania

- **CHOOSE—AND RECYCLE—GLASS**
  Glass is made here in PA, and because it's nontoxic, it's the safest packaging for your food and beverage. And because it's 100%, infinitely recyclable, every time you buy it and put it in the right bin, you're supporting a better and cleaner state. View PRC's Glass Bin Map or call the PA DEP Recycling Referral Hotline to find a glass drop-off bin near you.

- **CONTACT YOUR ELECTED OFFICIALS**
  Pennsylvania's recycling legislation is outdated, and you can encourage your lawmakers to update our laws requiring glass to be recycled or even pass a "Recycling Refund" law! Everyone from your local mayor to your state and federal representatives impact recycling in your area, and they need to know that recycling remains a priority for our communities.

- **BRING GLASS RECYCLING TO YOUR COMMUNITY**
  No glass recycling available near you? Contact PRC to learn how to bring glass recycling to your community! More info: **prc.org/glass**.

Every single bin we have set up in local communities has been spurred by people like you making your voice heard!

GLASS RECYCLING PARTNERS IN SWPA

Always Recycle

Don't Trash Glass!

Scan this QR code to see the glass bin collection network in SW PA.

GLASS BIN MAP

prc.org/glass

or Call **PA DEP Recycling Referral Hotline**

1-800-346-4242

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PRC Pennsylvania Resources Council
A Pennsylvania where nothing is wasted

Michael Brothers Hauling & Recycling

CAP GLASS INC

GLASS RECYCLING COLLABORATIVE of Southwestern PA

Pennsylvania Resources Council

A Pennsylvania where nothing is wasted

Don't Trash Glass!

Buy in Glass & *Recycle it*

prc.org/glass